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ABSTRACT

This bibliography contains twelve annotations from the ERIC system that focus on practical aspects of student activities programs. Publications cited deal with planning, organizing, evaluating, and funding of such programs. The principal's function is highlighted. One publication presents findings of a national survey concerning student activities programs, while another presents a 450-item bibliography on the topic. Some entries discuss particular programs such as intramural sports, student councils, or student leadership classes, while others focus on general aspects such as group dynamics. (JM)

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The Best of ERIC presents annotations of ERIC literature on important topics in educational management.

The selections are intended to give educators easy access to the most significant and useful information available from ERIC. Because of space limitations, the items listed should be viewed as representative, rather than exhaustive, of literature meeting those criteria.

Materials were selected for inclusion from the ERIC catalogs *Resources in Education (RIE)* and *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*.

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Student Activities Programs

1 **Christensen, Douglas D.** *Planning and Evaluating Student Activity Programs.* Reston, Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1978. 23 pages. ED 148 001.

A useful tool for planning, implementing, and evaluating a student activities program is the MBO/R (Management-by-Objectives/Results) method, fully described in this booklet. Essentially, MBO/R is "a systematic means for an individual or organization to decide what is wanted or what should be done and to formulate a plan of action to reach the identified purposes or goals." Thus, the method is not limited to use with student activity programs, but can be applied to any planning situation.

The first and most important step is to set goals. Goals are very important, says Christensen, because they "tend to create commitment toward their accomplishment" while providing direction and purpose to an endeavor. The author has included several questions and examples to help individuals or organizations identify goals.

The second step is to create an "action plan" consisting of highly specific statements (called "objectives" by the author), each of which "identifies one specific behavior or experience that is to be implemented or completed."

The third step is to delegate responsibilities, resources, and time toward the attainment of the objectives in the action plan. This step involves specifying the nitty-gritty details of reaching the goals and includes using a schedule or time line with specific deadlines.

The final step, and the one most often left out, is to evaluate the success of the plan of action. After comparing actual results with desired goals, one must decide whether the goals were realistic and whether the action plan was well designed. At this point, the "MBO/R Improvement Cycle" begins again with a new definition of goals. Included are examples of action plans and several examples of student activity program evaluation forms currently in use in various school systems.

2 **Gordon, Vera Julia.** "Extra Curricular Programs—How to Survive in an Era of Austerity." Paper presented at the National Association of Secondary School Principals annual meeting, New Orleans, January 1977. 5 pages. ED 136 371.

In times of inflation and shrinking budgets, how can a school maintain its extracurricular programs? The answers given here by Gordon make good economic sense: cut corners on expenses, increase revenues, and evaluate each activity to determine its purpose and whether it is indeed necessary.

In evaluating each program, Gordon emphasizes that the choice is rarely so simple as "keep as is" versus "eliminate in its entirety." More likely, the range is "keep, reduce, change, consolidate, incorporate, rotate, eliminate." Each cost component of a given activity should be examined for possible reduction and, when changes are made, they should be made clear to all involved. Included in the decision-making process should be administrators, staff, representative students, parents, and, in some cases, the community as a whole.

Student activities programs have several possible sources of support, including direct support from the overall school budget, student government funds, fees from members, and fund-raising events. Funds for extracurricular programs can sometimes be increased by various forms of direct appeal from the board of education, the school, or individual advisers, coaches, or department heads. The appeal can be very general in nature or it can be directed at a specific group, such as businesses, alumni, or parents of team members.

Fund-raising events can be a source of much additional income, but administrators should keep the process under eye. For example, the physical security of the money should be assured and good accounting techniques used. More importantly, the wisdom of the fund-raising project should be carefully judged; sometimes pressure to donate or purchase items can have a long-term negative effect on future fund appeals.

3 **Gorton, Richard A.** "How to Run an Efficient and Effective Student Activities Program." *NASSP Bulletin,* 60, 404 (December 1976), pp. 69-76. EJ 158 045.

There are several essential elements of a successful student activities program, including clearly defined program objectives and administrative and staff commitment. But perhaps the most important element for an activities program's success is good organization.

One of Gorton's organizational suggestions is a student activities handbook, to be distributed to students and other appropriate persons at the beginning of each school year. The handbook should contain information on each student group's activities, including "purposes, objectives, types of activities, qualifications for membership and holding office, adviser's name, and who should be contacted about membership or more information."

At the end of the year, each group should be required to prepare a report detailing the accomplishments and progress of the group

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and particular problems and issues remaining unresolved at the end of the year. The report, suggests Gorton, need be only two-to-four pages long and could be prepared jointly by student officers and the group's advisers.

Another organizational component should be periodic evaluation of the entire activities program once a year, if possible, but at least every two or three years. To help in this process, Gorton includes several questions the evaluator should ask about each specific activity and about the entire program.

Evaluation becomes much easier when each adviser and student officer has a written role description, says Gorton. In addition, both advisers and student officers should participate in developmental inservice training programs to improve their organizational and leadership skills. Administrators should also encourage participation in state and national student activities associations.

Other organizational components discussed by Gorton include a student-teacher advisory council for the total activities program and a director of student activities who would take charge of the overall program.

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4 **Hyatt, Ronald W.** *Intramural Sports: Organization and Administration.* Saint Louis: C. V. Mosby Co., 1977. 299 pages. ED 138 552.

This comprehensive book, addressed to the directors and leaders of intramural programs, is indeed the "complete" book on intramurals. It deals with the entire gamut of intramural topics, from the abstract philosophy of intramurals to the details of drawing up a budget. Although primarily addressed to college and university program directors, there is much that is applicable to intramural programs in public schools and other institutional settings.

Hyatt begins by discussing the history, philosophy, and definition of intramurals. He believes that a "new" intramural program is now being born. The new intramurals, which began emerging in the 1950s, differ from the old in that they are "wider in scope, offer more activities, possess more highly trained leadership, and render more services." In addition, they are often financed as a separate budget item and needn't be conducted within the confines of the school, as the name intramural implies.

In a separate chapter, Hyatt describes the "status of the profession," including the relationships of intramurals with physical education and varsity sports, the current prerequisites and salaries of intramural directors, and the job opportunities available in intramurals. Another chapter is devoted to the special problems and influences of women's intramurals, including the recent impact of federal legislation. These two chapters, as well as the other eighteen, conclude with complete lists of references for further reading.

The largest part of this book is devoted to the detailed "how-to" of organization and administration, budgeting, publicity, evaluation, tournaments, women's programs, corecreational activities, and much more. Organizational charts, sample forms, and pictures are abundant, as are references to research findings and the historical development of ideas. Separate chapters deal with such topics as units of competition and scheduling, rules and regulations, point systems, awards, faculty programs, sports clubs, public relations, and legal liability.

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5 **Klein, Norman S.** "Current Status of the Student Activity Programs in Wisconsin Public and Private Senior High Schools." *The Bulletin*, 2, 3 (Spring 1974), pp. 9, 18-20. ED 094 454.

The term "extra-curricular activities" should be eliminated, suggests Klein, and replaced with "student activities." This change would help promote the view that activities programs are an important part of the total educational experience and not "extra" or relatively unimportant.

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This is one of many recommendations that Klein makes after reviewing the results of a survey of student activities in Wisconsin high schools. Among the findings were that the principal is most often the person responsible for the activities program, though the literature suggests a need for a separate activities director. Most administrators acknowledged the need for more evaluation of activities, and some appear to be moving slowly in this direction.

The survey also revealed various restrictions placed on students' participation in activities, most frequently grade point average and behavior problems. Most administrators in both public and private schools were opposed to the idea of boys and girls participating together in interscholastic sports. Trends noted include a move toward electing a student to represent the student body at board meetings, and a move toward optional attendance at school assemblies.

Klein suggests that each school develop a set of written objectives and adviser handbooks for all their activities and include administrators, faculty, and students in the process. When activity advisers are chosen, the administrator should attempt to equalize the total load among teachers and give compensatory pay or released time, when possible, to teachers who spend time beyond the regular school day.

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6 **Kline, Charles E.,** and **McGrew, C. Daniel.** "Student Activities—An Essential Component." *NASSP Bulletin*, 58, 384 (October 1974), pp. 41-43. EJ 103 477.

Traditionally, the principal's role in student activities programs has been managerial and noninstructional in nature. Kline and McGrew believe, however, that "an activities program does have an instructional role and should be part of a principal's responsibility for instructional improvement."

The principal should first survey the staff to determine who can and will sponsor activities. In selecting a sponsor for a particular activity, the sponsor's qualifications for the assignment should be the primary criteria, not the sponsor's seniority or lack of it. The principal should also concentrate on equalizing the total workloads

of staff members when selecting sponsors.

After the sponsors are selected, they should undergo training in leadership, club management, economics, public relations, and legal accountability, to assure that they are aware of their responsibilities. Once a program gets rolling, the principal should periodically evaluate the program to "make improvements, ascertain progress and growth, give direction to planning, and serve as a record."

Kline and McGrew suggest that principals view student activities programs as a "third curriculum," designed to complement the other two curricula (the first being required courses, the second elective courses). In this view, the principal's function is to coordinate the three curricula to assure a rounded educational experience for students.

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7 **Long, Ruth; Buser, Robert;** and **Jackson, Michael.** *Student Activities in the Seventies: A Survey Report.* Reston, Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1977. 36 pages. ED 143 068.

One of every three students thinks extracurricular activities are more important than coursework. Seventy percent of administrators believe teachers are less interested in student activities than were teachers ten years ago. Two-thirds of student activity sponsors have three or more activities that they are solely or jointly responsible for.

These are just three of the many interesting findings in this report on a recent NASSP survey of student activities programs in the United States. The authors asked a wide cross-section of administrators, activity sponsors, and students about their views and attitudes toward cocurricular activities. They provide detailed discussions of their numerous findings and a wealth of tables illustrating the survey results.

The survey indicated that most students think extracurricular activities are very important—even more important than achieving high grades or having a car! Student interest is also indicated by the findings that nearly 40 percent of students spend ten or more hours per week on activities, and a majority spend $100 or more per year on activities.

Three-fourths of the administrators responded that underparticipation is a bigger problem than overparticipation, especially in larger schools. Almost all administrators believed that prospective teachers should receive more undergraduate training in student activities and that girls should be given more opportunities to participate in interscholastic sports.

Over 90 percent of sponsors spend weekend and evening time on adviser duties. Male sponsors are more active, as are sponsors from larger schools. About half of the surveyed sponsors have had no training for their role in their activity program, but most of these sponsors would like to have training. Less than half of the sponsors are compensated for their extracurricular work.

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8 **National Association of Secondary School Principals.** *Student Activities in Secondary Schools: A Bibliography.* Washington, D.C.: 1974. 95 pages. ED 089 188.

This annotated, 450-entry bibliography is a good first source for those wishing to get an overview of the literature on student activities. Most of the entries are from the 1960s, about 10 percent are from the early seventies, but some are dated as early as 1925. A large number of entries are from the journal *School Activities*, which ceased publishing in 1969.

The bibliography is divided into seventeen sections, with entries alphabetized within each section. Among the topics covered are organizing and administering, financing, student participation, evaluating, objectives and purposes, and faculty responsibility. Other sections deal with specific activities such as assemblies, athletics, clubs, music, publications, speech-drama, and student government.

The bibliography was written for principals, activity program administrators, student leaders, faculty members, instructors in teacher colleges, and researchers.

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9 **Powell, Janet F.** *Scheduling of Student Activities and Employment of Full-Time Activity Directors in Secondary Schools. An ERS Report.* Washington, D.C.: Educational Research Service, 1974. 21 pages. ED 098 667.

How do school districts across the nation schedule extracurricular activities? How many districts employ activity directors, and what are their assigned duties? These are the major questions answered in this ERS publication, which reports on the results of a 1971 NASSP survey of student activities and a similar survey conducted more recently by ERS.

The ERS survey found that nearly half of the responding districts scheduled all their activities after school in all or some of their high schools. This kind of scheduling was found to be more prevalent in larger schools. Another popular option was to schedule activities throughout the day. Smaller numbers of schools scheduled activity programs over an extended lunch period or during the last period of the day.

About one-fourth of all responding districts employed full-time activity directors. The employment of full-time directors was correlated with system size, so that few very small districts (300 to 2,999 students) employed directors (5.6 percent), while nearly one-third of the large- and medium-sized districts employed full-time directors. Interestingly, the presence of directors had little noticeable effect on how the activities were scheduled (after school, throughout the day, and so forth).

Job descriptions for activity directors were submitted by 26 of the 576 responding districts. Eleven of these descriptions are included in this report.

Some of the job descriptions are very general in scope, whereas others are much more specific. The duties assigned to the director vary widely, but most include coordination of the athletic program. Other duties include maintaining the school calendar, providing inservice training for activity sponsors, developing fire drill procedures, coordinating field trips, overseeing school publications, coordinating use of bulletin boards and showcases, and directing the student locker program.

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10 **Robinson, Russell D.** *Group Dynamics for Student Activities.* Reston, Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1977. 47 pages. ED 153 337.

Leaders sometimes believe that if a group is well organized and has clear goals and purposes, the success of the group is guaranteed. Not so, says Robinson, for there are four essential requirements for a successful group. Besides purpose and leadership, a group must have an acceptable means of communication between members, and the group members must

accept each other. Robinson devotes a chapter to each of these four essential factors in this clearly written monograph.

As a group develops, it goes through four stages, commonly designated "groping, griping, grasping, and grouping." When a group first comes together, members attempt to "checkout" the group and their potential place in it (groping). Next, the power structure of the group forms, as members struggle for control (griping).

After these self-centered stages, some members start behaving in ways that dampen conflict and make the group more "we-centered" (grasping). An extension of grasping is the final stage—grouping—when the members definitely feel themselves as part of a group.

In the chapter on leadership, Robinson discusses the types of leadership roles, leadership styles, and the duties and responsibilities of leaders. The three dimensions of leadership are defined as ability to accomplish the necessary leadership tasks, willingness to lead, and ability to maintain socially satisfying relationships in the group.

The communication chapter deals with problem-solving and decision-making processes in small groups. A separate chapter deals with handling group conflict and discusses topics such as conflict strategies and the "win-win" philosophy. Also discussed is group acceptance, with an emphasis on members' positions on Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

11 **Van Pool, Gerald M.** *Improving Your Student Council.* Reston, Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1977. 28 pages. ED 144 200.

How can a student council assess its organization and effectiveness, and what can it do to improve itself? Van Pool here provides both criteria for evaluating student council performance and a wealth of suggestions for improvement. He recommends that any council that wishes to improve its performance first go through the extensive list of criteria he provides and place a "yes" or "no" in front of each item.

Following the methods for diagnosing a council's performance, Van Pool presents numerous suggestions for the treatment of "sick" councils. The council, for example, should constantly strive to broaden communication with the student body. The opinions and reactions of students should be sought in all areas of the school program in which the council has influence, and the council should find numerous ways to report back to the student body.

The author devotes a separate chapter to the problem of how to "advertise" the student council, with methods ranging from school assemblies and newspaper columns to student handbooks and displays in the school's corridors.

Van Pool also warns councils against becoming cliquish or elitest organizations. The business of the council should not be secret; instead, the participation of every student should be encouraged. "One sure way to 'kill' a council," states Van Pool, "is to have it represent only a small segment of the school population," such as those with extremely high grade point averages.

12 **Young, Sandy.** *Developing a Student Leadership Class.* Reston, Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1977. 41 pages. ED 147 999.

"We specifically train plumbers, lawyers, doctors, and engineers," states the foreword to this monograph, "but presently very few schools teach the ingredients of leadership." In fact, states Young, only 15 percent of schools offer leadership training classes, though a great deal of lip service is paid to teaching leadership in the schools.

This booklet, addressed to activities advisers and school administrators, is designed to provide a rationale for leadership classes as well as specific information on course objectives, course content, and methods of instruction for leadership classes.

The first step in organizing a leadership class is to specify course objectives. It is suggested that sponsors begin by "analyzing your own situation and listing and giving priority to the goals you have for the course." But keep goals as specific and realistic as possible, Young emphasizes, so that progress toward their attainment can later be measured.

The course content of leadership classes can usually be grouped into three broad categories. "Basic techniques and skills of leadership and followership" includes information on roles and duties as well as techniques of speech writing and parliamentary procedure. "Organizational structures and styles" encompasses council organization, record-keeping, budgeting, and bookkeeping. "Group processing and personal development" includes problem-solving, decision-making, and human relationships. Other activities that could be covered include the workshop, the independent project, and peer counseling.

Young also discusses methods of instruction for leadership classes. To illustrate ideas throughout this monograph, the author has included numerous examples from existing leadership classes and, in an appendix, presents four complete leadership course outlines that are currently in use.

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